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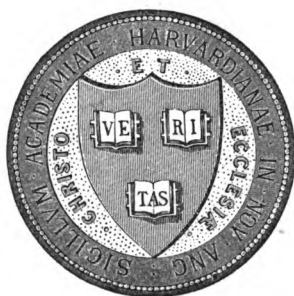
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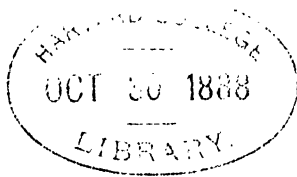
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TO THE
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CHAPTER XIX.

Socialism.—Horror of Socialism.—What Socialism is.—A Socialistic Post-office.—Socialistic Schools.—Socialistic Libraries and Parks.—Socialistic Water and Fire-engines.—Socialistic Money.—Socialism at West Point.—Socialistic Enterprises.—Advantages of Socialism.—Should Socialism be Extended?—Socialism does not Favor Laziness and Unthrift.—How to Help the Poor.—Ungrateful Snobs.—Future Probabilities.—Causes of Discontent.—Why Some are Richer than Others.—What shall We do?—Lessons of Experience.—“With what Measure ye Mete, it shall be Measured to you again.”—Need of Hastening Slowly.—Need of Changing our Patent Laws.—Defects in our Social System.—Folly of Violence.—The true Course.

It is never safe to allow one class to enact laws in regard to their own interests.

Napoleon is reported to have said: “The world is governed by epithets.” Certain it is, that in all periods of history, words have been used as the equivalent, or synonym, of elaborate and presumably conclusive arguments. Thus, for a considerable time in the history of this country, the term “Abolitionism” was employed to define particular ideas, so revolting to the majority that a mention of their name rendered useless any further statement or examination in regard to them. For a long period, the term “Christian” applied to a person was all that was necessary to brand him as an enemy of the human race, to whose words none but a knave or a fool should listen. A thousand years were not sufficient to destroy the argument once conveyed by the word “Jew.” Once having established the fact that a person was a Jew, no further consideration of his merits was deemed necessary. That name barred all argument and overpowered all facts. For many centuries, the term “heretic” was all the description needed of a person to show that his ideas and character were so utterly bad that society should treat him as an outlaw and regard

it a crime to listen to his speech or read his writings. Multitudes have been put to death for reading the works of authors to whom the epithet "heretic" had been applied. Hundreds of cases similar to the foregoing could be cited, all showing that a word, an epithet, has swayed the policy of nations, time and again.

Slowly and painfully, the world has outgrown a fear of many terms which once sent a thrill of horror through what was then the most respectable and intelligent portion of society. But human nature is unchanged. The difference between generations and ages is simply in the kind of words and epithets used, instead of arguments, to prove that certain ideas or modes of conduct are reprehensible. At first, epithets overpower all argument; but finally they lose their spell,—the real argument is listened to, and then the senseless nature of the epithets appears. But a new occasion at once arises; a new epithet is coined, which goes through the same stages as its predecessors.

HORROR OF SOCIALISM.

Recently, the term "Socialism" has been used to sum up and define certain ideas and principles so utterly absurd and wrong, in the estimation of the majority, that an examination of them is thought useless. It is presumed that nothing is requisite to condemn any proposition, but to establish the fact that it is "Socialistic."

Very learned essays and books have been written to show that socialism is utterly impracticable and visionary. But these wise men ignore the simple fact that, to a considerable extent, socialism is in actual and successful operation in this country, and is so intrenched in the good opinion of the masses of our population that nothing can dislodge it. The "impracticable notion" has arrived and has evidently come to stay.

WHAT SOCIALISM IS.

The essence of socialism is the ownership, management, and use of property, by numbers of persons in common,

enforced by law. Socialistic property is bought with means contributed in common; it is managed by agents whose wages are paid in common; and its use and objects are for the common welfare without reference to the amount contributed for its purchase and support by each individual. Those who contribute a large amount toward the purchase or support of socialistic property have no greater share in the benefits of its ownership than those who contribute very little, or nothing. It is state, colonial, or municipal ownership and control of property and business.

A SOCIALISTIC POST-OFFICE.

Our postal system is pure socialism. A vast amount of real estate has been bought with taxes paid in common. Buildings, many of them very costly, have been constructed with money paid in common. The carriers of the mails are paid from the common purse, and the same is true of all the agents employed to receive and deliver the mails.

To partially support this enterprise, a tax is laid on the people in accordance with the principles on which the postal property is bought and managed in other respects. The man who mails a thousand letters at once does not get them carried at wholesale price. Unlike ordinary commercial transactions, there is no such thing as charging a person more because he buys at retail. The price for one letter is one-thousandth part the price for carrying one thousand letters.

Whether a letter is carried two miles or two thousand miles makes no difference in the tax laid upon the sender. Neither does it make any difference whether the place to which a letter is to be carried is easily and cheaply reached by steamboat or railroad; or whether it can only be reached by a long and expensive journey by stage or horse-back.

In conducting the postal system, an army of agents and many millions of capital are employed. In fact, the reception, carriage, and delivery of the mails for fifty millions of people is a business of enormous magnitude. Considering

the immense territory over which this business extends; the difficulties of its accurate transaction; the great number of requisite employees; and the large amounts of money transmitted, the postal system can challenge a comparison of its management with that of any private enterprise.

It is not simply in this country that this socialistic enterprise is in successful operation. The civilized globe is now encircled with a chain of post-offices. And the experience of the whole world has recorded so much in favor of a post-office owned by the whole people, managed by the people's servants, and supported by taxes laid on a socialistic principle, that there is not the slightest probability of its ever being abandoned. Instead of that, the tendency is steadily toward widening the duties of the post-office. In England, postal savings-banks have been in successful operation for a considerable time. In this country, the cost of sending matter has been so much reduced that, for many purposes, the mails are now used instead of express companies. And it is quite probable that the functions of our postal department could be further increased with advantage by reducing the cost of sending packages under five pounds in weight, and by the establishment of a system of postal savings-banks.

SOCIALISTIC SCHOOLS.

Our common-school system is another example of pure socialism. School buildings, books and apparatus, to the extent of many millions of dollars, are owned in common. The wages of the teachers, the fuel, and all other attendant expenses of these schools are defrayed by laying a socialistic tax. The number of children a tax-payer sends to school makes no difference whatever with the amount of tax levied on him to support the common school.

Some persons have justly found fault that comparatively useless studies, such as Latin and Greek, are taught in our public schools. But, most such persons have advanced that such teaching was "socialistic." This is no reason at

all. If valid, the entire common-school system would be abolished as well as the study of Latin and Greek. Such studies are merely an abuse of our thoroughly socialistic common schools. Substantially, their defects are similar to those of the majority of private schools. They attempt to teach too many things; neglect instruction in the cardinal doctrines of honor and morality and burden the pupils' memory, instead of making plain the few simple principles upon which rest self-direction and independent thought.

SOCIALISTIC LIBRARIES AND PARKS

Public libraries are an example of socialism. The buildings and books are paid for and owned in common. A man worth only ten dollars has the same right in a free public library as a man has who is worth ten million dollars. Whether a person use the library himself or not makes no difference in the tax assessed upon him for its support.

Public parks are also forms of socialism. Such parks are owned, supported, managed and enjoyed by the public in common. He who never visits one of these parks is not thereby exempt from taxation for their support. The experience of cities which have established public libraries and parks is in favor of their continuance and extension.

SOCIALISTIC WATER AND FIRE-ENGINES.

The introduction of water in a city, by a city, is a purely socialistic enterprise. In such case, the expense of water for private use is defrayed by a tax laid in proportion to the water consumed. But the great expense of water for extinguishing fires and for other public purposes is defrayed by taxes laid on the community in common. The experience of cities is in favor of this form of socialism. As examples on an immense scale, we may look at New York, Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia and other large cities that have expended millions from the common purse to supply water in common. What would induce New York, for instance, to put the Croton water into the hands of a private company?

All the large cities have supplemented socialistic water with an expensive fire department. The tax-payer whose property does not need fire-engines for its protection pays the same tax as if it did. The engine-houses, the engines and all the other means for putting out fires are owned in common, and the wages of the firemen are paid from the common purse. Thus the interests of the fire department are made completely identical with the interests of the people.

SOCIALISTIC MONEY.

The mints are another illustration of pure Socialism. The mints and their machinery are owned in common and the expenses of their maintenance are defrayed by a common tax. Although a considerable sum of public money is yearly appropriated for the support of the mints there is no probability that any civilized nation on the globe will return to the old system of private coinage. Coinage by the State, for the benefit of the State, has been found better than to have coinage in the hands of those whose self-interest continually tempt them to act contrary to the common interest.

The greenbacks are socialistic. They are printed at the common expense and for the common benefit. The only kind of money now in circulation in the United States that is not socialistic is the national bank-notes and they are partially so. These notes are printed at the common expense, but they are made for the benefit of the national bankers, who loan them at interest to the people. In all probability, these notes will soon be replaced by national paper money, and then our entire currency will be composed of money made and used by the people, for the benefit of the people. No special class of persons will then have special rights to issue money for their own special benefit.

SOCIALISM AT WEST POINT.

West Point is a purely socialistic institution. Young men are fed, clothed, lodged and educated at the public

expense. Furthermore, as soon as their studies are completed, they are furnished permanent employment in the public service and paid out of the common money. When incapacitated in the public service, by any cause, from performing further duty they are paid a pension for the remainder of their lives. Thus, a graduate of West Point, who faithfully performs his duty, is an adopted child of the nation, certain of a maintenance through life. What record have the offspring of this socialistic mother made? There is but one voice on that subject. On the average, no class of public servants have rendered greater services to the nation; and none have shown greater fidelity and honesty when placed in positions where public interests and public money were in their keeping. If such good results flow from a socialistic school devoted to giving special instruction in the arts of war, why may not similar benefits flow from a kindred school devoted to giving special instruction in the arts of peace?

If a high sense of honor can be instilled into the pupils of one public school, why cannot other public schools be made teachers of personal honor?

SOCIALISTIC ENTERPRISES.

The attention of the whole civilized world has recently been directed to that wonderful achievement of science, the tremendous explosion which shattered acres of rock in Hell Gate Channel. But many persons do not reflect that it was a socialistic enterprise. It was directed by pupils of West Point; paid for out of the common purse; and performed for the common benefit, without the slightest reference to any other consideration.

Whoever visits New York or Brooklyn may see, hanging high in the air, a bridge connecting those cities which is one of the most daring and marvelous triumphs of engineering skill this world has ever seen. And yet this wonderful structure is the product of what self-styled "scientists" have told us was "utterly impracticable," municipal socialism. The Brooklyn Bridge has been built with common

money for the common benefit. Its benefits are comparatively untried. But enough is known to render it certain that, if by magic the bridge could be obliterated and its cost refunded to the people of the great cities whose common money built it, an overwhelming majority would refuse such a proposition.

Those past middle life can remember when nearly all the important bridges in this country were private property, for the use of which toll was charged. At the same time, our principal roads were managed by private companies who levied toll on travelers. Roads and bridges are now nearly all owned and kept in repair by the public and are free to the use of all. A community which has once abolished the inconvenience of toll-gates is not likely to permit their re-establishment.

ADVANTAGES OF SOCIALISM.

Many other examples of the actual and triumphant operation of socialism could readily be cited. The advantages of a successful public co-operation are enormous. They arise largely from the fact that when the whole people conduct a business the persons in charge of that business are public servants whose interests lie chiefly in serving the people to the best of their ability. For example, the people of the city of New York own the Croton water and hire those in charge of it. Therefore, these agents have few interests adverse to the interests of the people of New York.

But if a private company owned the Croton, the dominant question before its agents would be : How large profits can we make from the sale of this water? The larger the profits made under their management, the greater the probability of their continuance in office, at, perhaps, increased pay. The quality of the water and its abundant supply would be subordinated to a question which would arise whenever any improvement in the mode of obtaining or supplying the water was suggested ; viz., Will it pay? And by this question would not be meant : Will it pay the

people of New York? It would mean: Will it increase the profits of this water company?

What is true of a water company is true of a public mint, or any other form of established and successful public co-operation. Such a mode of conducting a business puts it out of the power of a few persons to conduct that particular business, solely to make it just as profitable to themselves, and just as great a burden on the rest of society as can safely be done.

Wealth may be, and often is, obtained by legal means which are superficially just but essentially unjust. Such means of getting wealth are more dangerous to the community than robbery by open violence, simply because they are so insidious as not to be immediately recognized and resisted. Those who have both the ability and the disposition to grow rich by stealthily preying upon the fruits of others' labor, are largely prevented from doing so, in whatever direction the general public assume control of a particular business. In other words, opportunities for getting more out of the public than is fairly given in return are limited by the extent to which business is carried on by the public themselves. For example, if the mails were not carried and distributed by the public, what a field for extortion and plunder that business would be! This might be done so as to appear at first sight equitable, and the superficial question continually asked in regard to that, as it now is with reference to existing extortion: "If the price be too high, why do you buy it?"

The public may, and sometimes do, suffer losses from dishonest officials. But such losses are usually trifling compared with the enormous robberies inflicted on society by the greed and rapacity of private owners who control something the public are obliged to buy of them. For instance, the public loses comparatively nothing by dishonest mint officials, although many millions of gold and silver yearly pass through their hands. On the side of private ownership, look at the vast sums continually stolen from the public by dishonest manipulation of railroads, telegraphs,

stocks, money and other forms of wealth under private control! Look at the colossal fortunes drawn from the people by placing extortionate prices on patented articles! And look at the great and sudden wealth obtained by artificially raising and lowering the prices of grain and other products!

SHOULD SOCIALISM BE EXTENDED?

The aforesaid facts, and kindred ones which could be readily cited, lead us to ask: Have we reached the limits to which socialism can be employed with benefit to society? That there is a point at which public co-operation must give way to individual and private liberty and freedom of action is undoubtedly true. The question is, what, and where that point is? How much further can the affairs of mankind be advantageously conducted by a system of co-operation so extended that every citizen is made one of the partners?

Those small persons who fancy themselves on the highest attainable peak of wisdom make an outcry at the least suggestion of a greater extension of municipal and national co-operation. But as such wails, and the doleful prophecies which always accompany them, have always occurred at every step of human advancement, little attention should be paid them.

However, because many things can advantageously be done in common, it by no means necessarily follows that therefore all business should be so conducted. It is clear that nothing should be done the tendency of which would be to encourage laziness and wastefulness, neither should anything be done that would weaken incentives to acquire an individual home and support an individual family.

SOCIALISM DOES NOT FAVOR LAZINESS AND UNTHRIFT.

It is commonly supposed that all forms of socialism foster the vices of idleness and improvidence. But the present generation, living under the influence of a large number of socialistic institutions, are more industrious and provident

than their forefathers were who lived before public ownership and management of property were dreamed of to the extent now in actual existence and operation. There is no evidence that the postal department, public schools, public libraries, and public parks make those who enjoy their advantages either lazy or shiftless. On the contrary, those institutions, and kindred ones, are potent generators of industry and thrift. Their demonstrated tendency is to elevate the self-respect of the masses; to widen the horizon of their thoughts and ideas; to give them a fuller and more comprehensive knowledge of the advantages derived from ownership of capital; and, above all, to inspire them with hope that there is a possibility of their condition growing steadily better, if they will only make a little more effort to help themselves.

HOW TO HELP THE POOR.

The history of all attempts to improve the condition of a degraded class tells one story with painful monotony. No idleness and improvidence are so difficult to remedy as that of persons in poverty and misery, hopeless of ever being able to reach a condition of greater comfort and independence. Despair is the most dangerous of all social diseases. Whatever makes it a little easier for such persons to escape from the bondage of abject poverty and humiliating social inequality, and whatever throws light upon a path leading from the morass in which they are mired to higher and pleasanter grounds, has a powerful tendency to make them more industrious and frugal. Little can be done to ameliorate the condition of a community, or an individual, by direct alms. But means which show the easy possibilities of self-help are permanently fruitful of good results.

UNGRATEFUL SNOBS.

We frequently witness events which make us ashamed of our kind. We see persons who in childhood occupied a position verging on pauperism. By the kindly help of socialistic institutions they have emerged from want and a

precarious existence to a state of comparative affluence and wealth. They now snarl at the hand that lifted them out of the mud, and clothed and fed them. They denounce the Sermon on the Mount as an ancient humbug and proclaim the gospel that every man should solely take care of himself. This shallow selfishness is styled "Economic Science."

FUTURE PROBABILITIES.

Our ancestors, five hundred years ago, imagined their social organization perfect. We are prone to imitate them and to fancy further progress impossible. But history forces us to concede that the tendency of our race, the world over, for the past century, has steadily been toward the principle of socialism. Where we shall ultimately land no one can tell. The certain thing is, that many kinds of business are now conducted with great advantage by the whole people which, one hundred, and, in many cases, fifty years ago, it was supposed could only be fitly carried on by private enterprise. Reasoning from the past, it seems probable that the results of human selfishness can be mitigated, and a remedy found for many social evils, by placing still more kinds of business under public ownership and control.

CAUSES OF DISCONTENT.

It is commonly imagined, that multitudes are discontented simply and solely because some men have more wealth than others. But in fact such is not generally the case. Very few persons are so utterly foolish and unreasonable as to deny that a man is entitled to the fruit of his own labors. By reason either of inherited ability, better opportunities, or superior diligence in self-improvement, one man may possess more than average skillfulness in carrying on some particular industry. If he diligently employ his attainments and strength in thus creating wealth, it is perfectly clear that the amount of wealth so created belongs to him just as rightfully as it would if, by reason of less skill and less industry, said amount were smaller. It is also evident, that if one man, by practicing superior economy, save

and accumulate more of the product of his labor than another, he is the owner of the amount so saved, just as rightfully as if, by less carefulness, or less self-denial, its amount were smaller. The portion of the community which will deny the foregoing propositions is insignificant in numbers and influence, and always must be.

The Creator gave us equality of rights but did not give us equality either of physical or mental strength. As man's powers, to a considerable extent, are devoted to the creation of wealth it necessarily follows that inequality of power to create wealth, must naturally result in an inequality in the amount of wealth created by different individuals. Furthermore, as men's judgments of the relative importance of things differ; and as some men are willing to undergo more self-denial for the purpose of saving wealth than others; it necessarily follows that, by virtue of superior self-denial and economy, some men will naturally have, and justly possess, more wealth than others. But, after conceding the foregoing self-evident truths, the root of the matter we are considering remains untouched: viz., *Except to a very limited extent, the great and increasing inequality of wealth, is not due to the superior skill, industry and economy in creating and saving wealth, of one man over another.*

WHY SOME ARE RICHER THAN OTHERS.

Great inequality of wealth chiefly arises from the ability of one man being so dextrously and cunningly employed in manipulating and managing commercial and legal machinery as to result in his absorbing a considerable portion of the wealth created by a large number of other men. A small portion of wealth thus taken from each one of a large number of persons amounts to a great sum when collected in one man's hands.

Great wealth is usually not acquired by great skill and labor in its creation, because life is too short and man's powers are too limited to render such a thing ordinarily possible. Skill in obtaining legal possession of wealth created by the labor of others is the secret of most large fortunes.

There are exceptions to the foregoing rule, but they are rare. Whoever doubts it is invited to trace the history of the large estates within his knowledge. Donations to hospitals, schools and kindred objects are frequently merely attempts to divert public attention from the fact that considerable property has been gathered in one mass by indefensible methods. Vanity thus incites the donor to give property, which justly belongs to others, in a public manner.

The evil we are called on to diminish is one man so using his abilities, his position, and his capital, as not to violate law and to appear fair : but, nevertheless to take advantage of others and thus acquire more wealth than in equity belongs to him.*

* As an indication of growth toward a public recognition of hitherto largely unsuspected evils, the following letter, written by a distinguished clergyman to the *New York Sun*, January 4, 1886, is republished :

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir* : You quoted lately a passage from an article of mine on overwealth, and invited me to explain my views. They are simply these :

1. Dangers to the peace and prosperity of the country must be guarded against by the Government and laws.
2. Men and corporations, so large pecuniarily as to be able to buy up Legislatures, are a danger to the peace and prosperity of the country.
3. The acquisition and holding of such wealth should be carefully hedged about by wise legislation.

There is my syllogism. Now let me add a few notes :

1. A large part of the enormous wealth of individuals and corporations is made by lying, stealing, and oppression. The running up and down of stocks, what is known as "bulling and bearing," is practical lying, and has nothing to do with real values. Stock watering is nothing but stealing. Credit Mobilier schemes, by which directors rob stockholders to enrich themselves, are common methods of oppressing the poor, who have been fooled into putting their little all into stock.
2. The rich man is protected by law, and what with preferred creditors and property held in his wife's name and a hundred other devices, he fails and is as rich as ever. The poor man is thrown out of employment, and has nothing to fall back on. He can be turned out at a moment's notice, and has no redress.
3. We need legislation that will defend the poor, *e. g.*, making a month's notice necessary before discharging a hand, paying him by the year as a salaried man, and giving him a proportional interest in the concern.

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

If we would, we cannot evade the questions which this perverted use of the mechanism of our social organization forces upon us. When every man has a vote, unless the great majority are satisfied, they will certainly make changes of some kind in the national policy. With the present growing discontent, it is not simply a question of standing still or not. The problem is narrowed down to this: In what direction shall we move? Shall we make our social system still more democratic by adopting measures whose tendency will be to create a more equal distribution of wealth? Or shall we make our social system more aristocratic and more plutocratic by adopting measures whose tendency will be

4. We need legislation that will make the man, as he grows richer, to bear more of the public burdens. The graduated income tax would be the most equitable. If that be impracticable, as many hold, then let the nearest practicable plan be adopted, so that with us, as in ancient Athens, the rich shall bear the chief burdens of the State.

5. We need legislation to restrict the power of corporations, forbidding and preventing gifts, direct or indirect, all watering, all use of franchises without full payment of value to the State, all interest of directors in side schemes of a parasitic nature, all secrecy of operation, all combination with other corporations, and all exorbitant dividends at the cost of the public.

6. With such legislation there need be no limitation of property. Justice, equal to all, will give trade and acquisition a natural health, which is now denied by a partial legislation in favor of the rich and of great corporations. With such legislation property will be naturally limited, and there will be no place for discontent or socialism.

7. If we saw a man a mile high stalking over this way from the West, and discovered that he had already trampled eight or ten towns into nothingness, we should feel called upon to take measures to suppress him before he could put his big foot on the *Sun* Building and blot out its light forever. He would be a danger which we should be justified in preparing against. Our great corporations are very much like this giant. They crush thousands where they tread. They hire journals, courts, and Legislatures, and have everything their own way. It is for the people of our land so to curb this power that it may be only useful and not harmful. If this be socialism, I am a Socialist.

HOWARD CROSBY.

to widen the distinction between classes, to increase the number living in luxurious idleness, and to place the wealth and power of the country in fewer and fewer hands?

By gross deception the people, in recent years, have been misled into sanctioning measures whose tendency is plutocratic. This has been effected partially by raising the cry: "Socialism! Socialism!" and pretending that socialism was the essence of evil. But all experience tells us not to be alarmed by cries raised by those who think progress consists in sitting still; and by others fearful that their unjust privileges will be taken from them. Suggestions for further practical application of the principle of public co-operation are legitimate, and worthy of the most earnest and careful consideration. Should such an inquiry reveal that a profitable extension of socialism could be made, if honest public agents were more easily obtained, let us improve our common schools by teaching therein a keener sense of personal honor.

Theorists have advanced doctrines adverse to such beneficent common works as the improvement of Hell Gate, public schools, public money, and kindred things. But these persons are insignificant in numbers and everything else except in the assurance with which they make pretense of superior wisdom.

LESSONS OF EXPERIENCE.

In England, where government by the few has had the fullest and fairest trial, such government is pronounced against by a steadily increasing minority composed of the foremost thinkers of that nation. The bulwark for centuries of aristocratic ideas bids fair, by the magic of discussion and thought, to soon be converted into a democracy. Those who admire the medieval barbarism which now lingers in England will then be forced to transfer their affections to Russia, or some other despotism.

Not only England, but the whole world is demonstrating the failure of all forms of government, animated by the principle that a few—the privileged, the rich, the cunning, and

the strong—should rightfully be permitted to prey upon the many, the simple, the poor, and the weak.

“WITH WHAT MEASURE YE METE, IT SHALL BE MEASURED TO YOU AGAIN.”

Despotisms are trying to build dams wherewith to stay, among the masses, the slowly but steadily rising tide of broader thought and wiser appreciation of their own rights. But the higher the dams are raised the higher the water will surely rise behind them. When the inevitable break comes, these builders will be lucky if the shattered ruins be not stained with blood. There is only one question concerning retribution being visited on privileged classes which oppress a nation, viz.: How long will it be delayed?

Let us then go forward without fear toward a fuller, a more humane, and therefore a wiser democracy. The path which leads to equal justice to all and to national adoption of the principle that the strong should help, instead of taking advantage of the weak, is the only path of safety. All others are lined with pitfalls. Let us be bold in search of Truth. Let us trust the conclusions to which it leads, and, at the same time, be cautious in devising and adopting measures to put them in practical operation and effect.

NEED OF HASTENING SLOWLY.

“In a multitude of counsellors there is safety.” There is little danger that any pernicious measure will be adopted which is first fully subjected to public criticism. But where principles are framed into law, without such publicity, serious mistakes are likely to be committed.

No important law should be enacted by the legislature or congress to which it is first submitted. All such laws should be first carefully sifted. Those deemed worthy of possible enactment should be published as “Proposed Laws,” and their final passage deferred to the next legislature, enlightened by at least one year’s public consideration of them.

Two important results would flow from a procedure like

that aforesaid. First. A much needed check would be placed on hasty and ill considered legislation. Progress would be more rapid because less time would be lost in retracing false steps. Second. The practical application and workings of democracy and socialism would be extended. The whole people would have a greater voice than they now have in the enactment of laws and in shaping and directing the course and policy of our social organization. More fully than at present every man would be a legislator.

NEED OF CHANGING OUR PATENT LAWS.

Of several ways which could readily be named whereby the principle of socialism could advantageously be given a wider practical application, let us briefly examine one, viz.: the public ownership of all inventions.

Suppose a physician or a surgeon should make a discovery of great importance to mankind and claim the right to sell said discovery to a capitalist, who, for 17 years, would deprive the people of its benefits unless extortionate prices were paid for them. Such a medical man would be justly denounced as a traitor to the profession whose mission is to allay human misery. Yet this is similar to what is done by inventors who sell important patents.

In the aggregate, the public pay an enormous tax in form of high prices on patented articles. In the vast majority of instances this tax is not paid to the inventors of those articles or of the machines which create them, but to the capitalists who directly or indirectly control the patents. Inventors generally lack the requisite capital to manufacture and distribute what is covered by their patents; hence necessity compels a bargain with some one who has. In a majority of cases the proverb is then exemplified, that "necessity never makes a good bargain."

As competition with a manufacturer whose wares are protected by the patent law is out of the question, the whole community are constantly paying a large, and often a wrongful, tribute to those who control patents. Capital

thus quietly obtains and seizes an opportunity to levy an unfair tax on labor. When one patent expires, an improvement on the old one, or some entirely new patent, is secured ; thereby enabling capital to silently maintain an unnoticed and powerful advantage.*

What will future ages think of a matter of then almost forgotten history, a system of law whereby the public benefit of inventions is postponed for half a generation after their practical application to some useful purpose?

Every useful invention tends to remove the human race one step further from their primitive poverty and its accompanying privation and toil. It is therefore sound public policy to foster invention. But we must remember that each individual inventor adds only one stone to the monument of human knowledge which countless numbers of his predecessors have reared. Without the knowledge which has thus become common property, his invention would not have been possible. Therefore, the owners of this common

* The following news item, from the *St. Louis Republican*, illustrates how our present patent law postpones the full benefit of inventions. Many similar facts could be adduced.

NO CHEAP TELEPHONES BEFORE THE YEAR 1900.

It will be a long time before telephoning becomes cheap. Bell's first patent, the one upon which all the others are founded, is dated March 7, 1876. Patents are seventeen years in duration, and this first patent will thus run out in 1893. But there are other patents of more recent date upon parts essential to the operation of the instruments. For instance, the Blake transmitter was not patented until 1881, and it is so broad that it may be said to cover almost any transmitter which might be constructed. This will practically secure the monopoly until 1898. Then there have been many other patents of date up to a very recent time, which, while not absolutely essential to telephoning, would defeat competition even if every patent on essential parts were out of the way. Thus the Bell Company controls patents upon switchboards and other apparatus used in making connections which would put competition by those who have not the right to use them at a great disadvantage. The nineteenth century will see no change from the present conditions, and it is impossible to foresee what other improvements will be patented which will in the future be considered necessities.

knowledge have a paramount right to every new invention. For his addition to the common stock of knowledge, the inventor should be treated as a citizen who has made a notable contribution to the commonwealth. He should be pensioned, or, in some other way, paid from the common purse, and paid very liberally. But neither he, nor his assigns, should be allowed, as at present, to make a step of human progress, for a considerable period of time, an instrument of human oppression.

Public ownership of inventions would not in the least check the development of scientific and mechanical knowledge and skill. On the contrary, it would stimulate them, by rendering their rewards more equitable and certain.

But it would have a powerful tendency to check the growth of huge monopolies which virtually force the public to pay them extortionate profits on their goods, while the operatives whose labor created them are paid low wages. It would then be generally seen, that much of what is now ascribed to our tariff is really due to the evil influence of private ownership of inventions which should be free to every man who wishes thereby to render his labor easier, or more productive.

DEFECTS IN OUR SOCIAL SYSTEM.

What course should be pursued by those who believe the evils of monopoly and concentration of wealth in few hands could be diminished by enlarging the field of national co-operation?

Wherever wrong exists there is always one proper way to attack it, and that is the manner by which it can most effectually and speedily be destroyed. The choice of means depends entirely on circumstances. Revolutionary violence is not only admissible, but commendable, whenever despotism has shut off other means of redress.

But in a nation where suffrage is universal and unobstructed, no reasonable question can arise relative to the proper method of righting a public wrong. Where every man is armed with a ballot; where the mails are open for the dis-

semination of ideas ; and where freedom of speech and assembly for discussion are unfettered, political agitation is by far the most potent means of abating any evils which may exist in the social organization. Where all power is lodged in the hands of the people they have no one but themselves to blame if the laws, or their administration, be not what they desire.

FOLLY OF VIOLENCE.

Lately, it has been said : " We wish changes in our national policy but cannot get them, because the great majority oppose us and could beat us in a political contest. Therefore, armed resistance is the only way to obtain our wishes." To such persons it may be said : If you are in such a small minority that a political contest is hopeless, would not a struggle with arms be equally hopeless?

Many who desire political changes overlook the readiness with which these changes can be obtained. Legislators and politicians are continually watching the drift of public sentiment. Each party constantly tries to act in accordance with the wishes of the supposed majority of voters. Consequently, the policy of each party is based on the judgment of their political leaders as to what laws the people will ratify at the next election. As these leaders have substantially equal sources of information, the result is the very nearly equal balancing of the two great political parties.

The result of the aforesaid facts is that a resolute minority of one voter in every hundred can often hold the balance of power. And in the great majority of cases, a minority of one voter out of every twenty, who will unflinchingly adhere to their principles, are absolutely certain of inducing one of the great parties to adopt their ideas.

THE TRUE COURSE.

The lesson of these facts is obvious. Whenever a few persons imagine themselves possessed of ideas which would benefit the public to incorporate into law, it is their duty to organize themselves into a political party for the express

purpose of disseminating such ideas. If those sentiments will not bear the ordeal of public scrutiny and debate, they will deservedly soon become ridiculous and drop out of sight. But if they are founded in justice, means for putting them in practical operation will soon be devised, and their triumph will only be a question of time.

Away, then, with all foolish talk about violence, bloodshed and arson being necessary to redress existing wrongs. Such criminal folly only aggravates present evils and postpones their destruction. Let all socialists fully state their demands and the arguments therefor before that socialistic tribunal, gatherings of voters during political campaigns. The ballot is the most effective weapon which can be wielded against wrongful methods of government. Therefore, organizations and assemblages for the purpose of political education are essential, alike to the preservation of regulated liberty and to further social development.

[*Extract from Chapter XVIII.*]

ONE OF THE MAIN ROOTS OF THE LABOR QUESTION.

What a long period of suffering and privation has intervened between the present and the time when man first stood on earth with no tools but his naked hands. And how much easier the lives of our ancestors might have been if they had possessed the implements we now have.

To those who were actors in that drama, it seems but as yesterday since this country emerged from a civil war terribly destructive of life and property. The initial point of this awful struggle arose from discussion of a question which irresistibly thrust itself upon public attention: "Has one man

a right to own another man?" In other words : Has capital a right to own labor?

One phase of this contest was settled by the war. One form of slavery was abolished. One method, which capital employed to own labor, has been made impossible. But other means and devices employed by capitalists to own laborers are still under legal protection, and in the majority of instances are sanctioned and defended by the same persons who bitterly denounced the form of labor ownership extinguished by the logic of human butchery. Since the war, the majority of persons imagine that capital cannot own labor. But a little examination shows, that the emancipation measures only partially destroyed the control of the capitalist over the laborer.

For example, let us suppose an industrial arena of some kind ; no matter whether it be a factory, a forge, a mine, a plantation, or a ship-yard, wherein one thousand laborers are employed. Comparatively few, and those inexpensive, tools are required. Each workman furnishes his own tools and is paid a certain amount of wages per day. Under such conditions, the laborer is comparatively independent. If any disagreement arise between the employer and himself, he can pack up his tools in a few minutes and, with his tools on his back, seek employment elsewhere.

OWNERSHIP OF WHATEVER PERFORMS LABOR IS OWNERSHIP OF LABOR.

Let us reverse the aforesaid conditions and see what the result will be. Suppose some inventor should create an automaton of steel, wood and leather which will perform exactly one man's labor in a day's time. The cost of this automaton to be \$500. Under such a condition of facts, is it not clear that if the capitalist should buy one thousand of these bloodless laborers he would own his labor? He could turn the men made of flesh and blood adrift. He could carry on his works by the labor of his own chattels just as truly as if those chattels consisted of one thousand

Africans, just landed from a slave ship, for which he had paid \$500 a piece.

Let us now perfectly retain the principle involved in the last aforesaid example and state another condition of affairs. Suppose the aforesaid capitalist, instead of buying a thousand automatons, should buy a steam-engine and some machinery, which would enable one hundred laborers to perform as much labor in a day as a thousand laborers could with the old-fashioned tools owned by themselves. The machinery is so expensive that the laborers are too poor to buy it. Even if they combined, and saved money enough to start a rival industry, they could not make and use machinery similar to that owned by the capitalist. He has his machinery protected by a law called "a patent," and as this law is backed by the entire judicial and military power of the nation, he has the exclusive right, for a long term of years, to use the machinery covered by that patent. It is utterly in vain for the nine hundred workmen to think of competition with machinery by using their own tools. Now, in this case, is it not just as clearly true that the capitalist owns the labor of nine hundred men, as it is in the aforesaid hypothetical case in which he owned the labor of a thousand bloodless workmen?

A FISH-HOOK MACHINE.

In this city, at the present time, several automatic laborers are at work making fish-hooks. The wire is automatically fed into one end of a machine, and, without the touch or guidance of a single human finger, it emerges from the other end of the machine a perfectly finished fish-hook. The hooks are made by one of these machines many times faster than they could be made by a machine of flesh and blood. A pail is hung on a spout at the end of the machine where the hooks emerge, and into this the completed hooks rapidly fall. Whoever will take the pains to examine the construction of a fish-hook cannot fail to see that the aforesaid machine is a great stride toward the creation of automatons which will accurately and uncomplainingly perform

the labor of living machines. It will also clearly appear to him, that the capitalist who owns one of these expensive machines, protected from competition by a patent, and by successive patents on improvements in that machine, virtually owns several fish-hook makers. He owns the fish-hook makers, because he owns and has absolute control over the tools without which those fish-hook makers cannot earn five cents a day.

Hundreds of illustrations similar to the fish-hook machine could be cited. But that is sufficient to exemplify the principle involved in all such cases, viz.: *Whoever owns the tools, without which a workman cannot earn a living, owns the labor of that workman, and, to that extent, owns the workman himself.* Whenever this occurs, capital virtually owns labor.

A MAN SHOULD CONTROL HIS MEANS OF SUBSISTENCE.

In one sense, a laborer without tools has perfect freedom. But, if deprivation of tools imply deprivation of the means of supplying himself with the necessities of life, whoever controls his tools controls the workman's very existence. Just to the extent the capitalist can control the laborer's food, the capitalist has control of the laborer's liberty and person. It is possible that the workman's liberty may thus be restricted to that amount of which it has always been impossible to deprive a slave;—viz., the liberty of dying.

What occurs in the aforesaid example, in case a disagreement arise between the owner of the nine hundred metallic workmen and the one hundred living workmen? Suppose the one hundred, thinking they are not receiving a just proportion of the wealth created jointly by themselves and the nine hundred automatic workmen, should strike for higher wages? Their demands are not acceded to and the entire thousand laborers are thrown out of employment. What then happens? It is certain that the owner of the nine hundred workmen, or what is essentially the same thing, the machines which perform a labor equivalent to

the labor of nine hundred men, is at comparatively little expense for the maintenance of his chattels. While they are idle, he loses the interest on their value and is at the expense of protecting them from rust and other injury. Derangement of his business also causes him, to a considerable extent, loss of the value of his own services in managing it. But the hundred living workmen are subjected to nearly the same daily expenses when idle as when at work. The idle machines, the automatic laborers do not eat. But the idle workmen must eat or die.

In such an event, is it not apparent that the power of the one man who owns nine hundred laborers is far greater to coerce the hundred, than the power of the hundred is to coerce the owner of the nine hundred workmen?

One of the chief characteristics of the last century is the enormous progress therein made in mechanical art and skill. The principles discovered by scientific men in the laboratory and study have been converted to practical use in the workshop by the inventor and artisan. The vast majority of the tools used by labor, wherewith to create wealth, one hundred years ago, have been made worthless by the invention of better ones, and the few in existence are found only as curiosities in museums and similar places.

Every year a large addition is made to the great number of labor-saving machines already in use. In all probability, the future will witness as great an increase in the invention of machinery as has occurred in the past. Many minds are constantly at work devising plans for introducing machinery into departments of industry where manual labor still holds sway. It is likely these persons will, to a greater or less extent, succeed in their purpose.

NEED OF A LARGE AMOUNT OF CAPITAL.

When the whole field of invention and mechanical skill is surveyed at a glance, another startling fact appears, viz.: the steadily growing expensiveness of machinery. It is steadily growing more effective and performs more and

more of the work formerly done by human hands. This necessitates and implies machines more ponderous, more complicated, more accurately constructed, and more costly than those of inferior power of execution and less adaptation to the peculiar purpose required. Every year more and more capital is required to equip a mechanic with tools which will enable him to successfully compete with others engaged in producing the same forms of wealth that he is.

The inevitable result of the foregoing facts is that the tools of labor are steadily passing into the ownership of capitalists and beyond the control of the artisans, the successful prosecution of whose calling depends on the use of those tools. Some one must be the owner of these tools, and such ownership makes a capitalist. In an indirect, but nevertheless very effective manner, capital yearly owns more and more labor. It is constantly growing more difficult for a mechanic, beginning life with nothing but his bare hands, to obtain the independence which naturally flows from the combined ownership of tools and possession of the requisite skill to use them in creating some form of wealth. What chance has a poor mechanic, of average business ability, to ever become the owner of a tool so expensive that the annual interest on its cost is greater than his entire wages for a year? Such a person has not a fair chance in the ever present industrial struggle, compared with the inheritors of wealth, the born owners of the mechanics' tools in use at present. If he undertake to own his own tools, he has the terrible disadvantage of working in competition with men already the owners of many workmen with iron bones and steel fingers. What wonder is it that he should either despair or be filled with hatred of a social system under which such inequalities of position are possible?

This then is one of the problems which, whether we desire to or not, we must face and solve. Cowardly evasion will not avail. Wisdom and humanity unite in bidding us candidly recognize the facts, and, by interchange of thoughts, arrive at just conclusions.

INVENTIONS SHOULD NOT BE MADE MEANS OF OPPRESSION.

What remedies shall we employ to cure the aforesaid evil before it develops into a more alarming condition?

Obviously, it is neither the destruction of labor-saving machines nor the repression of invention. Every automaton which performs human labor should be recognized as a means of relieving mankind from drudgery. If it do not, it is not the machine which is to blame. It is the conditions under which it is employed that are at fault. Every inventor who facilitates the creation of wealth should be crowned as a general in the field of industry whose victories over matter have been won by patient thought and labor. If his creations, after being set at work, leave behind them a trail of oppression, distress, and bitterness, it is not his fault. They should bring additional wealth, comfort, and happiness to every member of the human family. When they fail to do so, the social system under which they are employed must be defective in some way.

The annual production of wealth in this country is estimated at about twenty per cent. of the total wealth of the country. A considerable portion of this wealth is the product of automatons,—of various kinds of machinery. It follows that, to the extent that a class controls such machinery and receives the profits therefrom, just to that extent such a class controls and absorbs the annual production of wealth. But this is not the fault either of the machines or of the inventors who devised them. The defect is in the manner in which the ownership of those machines and the profit arising from their use are distributed.

HOW INVENTIONS ARE MADE.

All scientific discoveries and all devices whereby a discovery is practically applied to the improvement of the condition of mankind are not due solely to the labors of the immediate discoverer and inventor. They are the culmination of the thoughts and labors of generations. As

SOCIAL STRUGGLES.

SECOND EDITION—REVISED.

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE.

In the preparation of this work, several distinct objects have steadily been kept in view:

FIRST. To portray, in a manner more simple than has hitherto been attempted, the mechanism of Barter and Exchange and the function of Money.

SECOND. To elucidate the nature of Value and the unchangeable laws which govern its creation, increase, and diminution.

THIRD. A simple statement of the Philosophy of Prices; their origin, and the chief causes of their fluctuation.

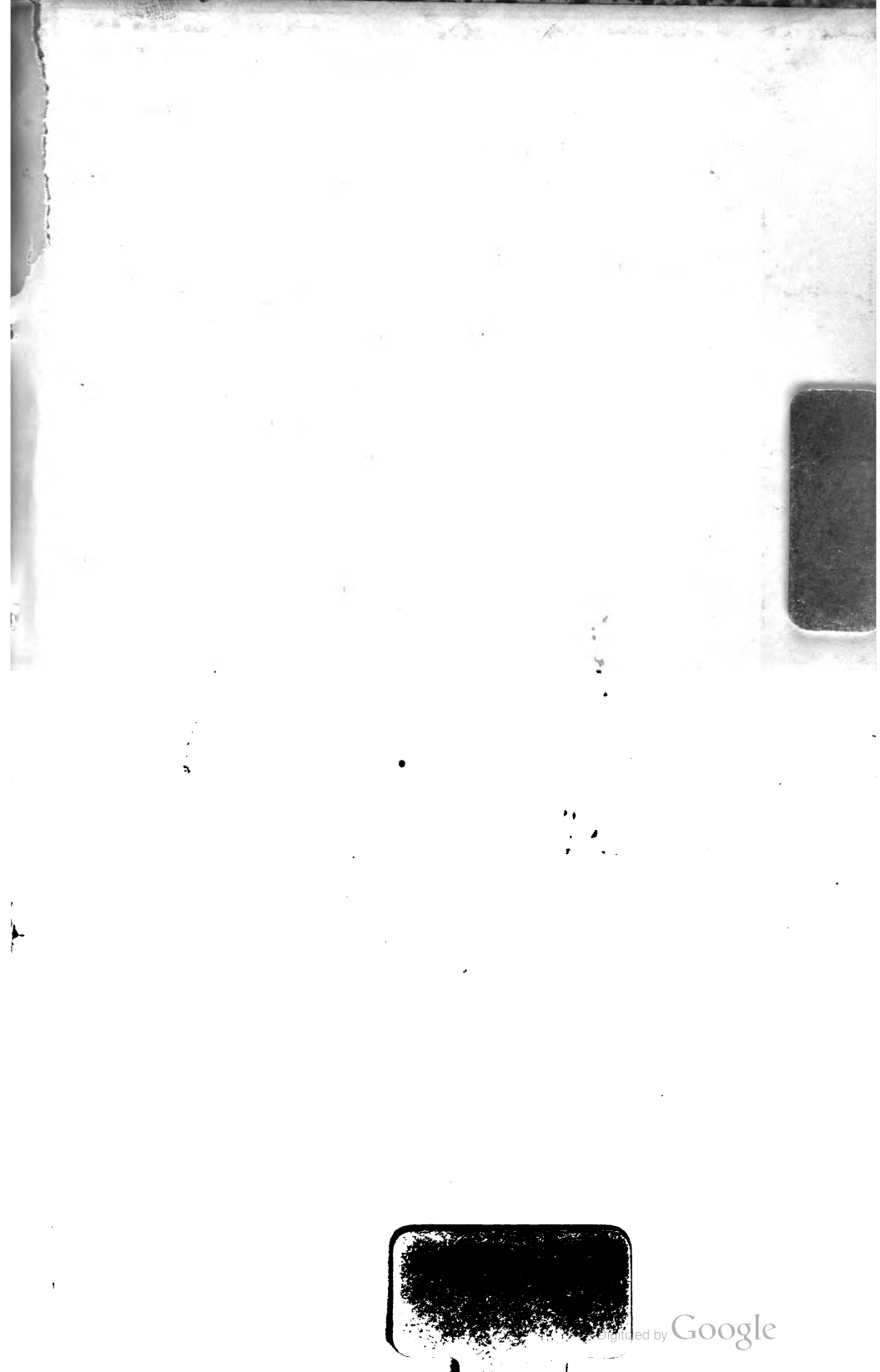
FOURTH. An analysis of the natural relations of Capital and Labor, of Creditor and Debtor, and some of the methods whereby statutes can modify those relations.

FIFTH. To show the effect which a correct policy of taxation may have upon individual and national prosperity.

Scholarly critics have pronounced the discussion of the above topics, "by far the most original and profoundly interesting that has yet appeared."

DEDICATION.

TO THE
MEN WHOSE STEADFAST VALOR HAS BEEN OUR NATIONAL RELIANCE
IN TIMES OF WAR, AND WHOSE PATIENT INDUSTRY HAS EVER
BEEN OUR SUPPORT; TO THOSE WHOSE BUSINESS AND
DAILY BREAD ARE VITALLY AFFECTED BY FLUCTUA-
TIONS IN PRICES, WAGES AND INTEREST;
TO THE FARMERS, MECHANICS AND OTHER
HONEST CREATORS OF WEALTH, THIS
WORK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.



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